

CLAIMS

RECEIVED 05 APR 2004

What is claimed is:

1. A method of making a tobacco material with reduced levels of lignin and nitrogenous compounds comprising :
 - (a) contacting a tobacco material with a first aqueous solvent at a temperature of about 25°C to 80° C for about 0.5 to 2 hours to provide an aqueous tobacco extract and a tobacco fiber portion;
 - (b) separating said aqueous tobacco extract from said tobacco fiber portion;
 - (c) contacting at a temperature from about 25°C to 120°C said tobacco fiber portion with a solution containing hydrogen peroxide and an alkali metal hydroxide wherein said solution contains said hydrogen peroxide in a concentration of from 2.5% to 12.0% (w/w) and said alkali metal hydroxide is from about 1% to 5% (w/w); and,
 - (d) separating said solution from said tobacco fiber portion.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - (e) contacting said tobacco fiber portion with a second aqueous solvent.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein said tobacco material is lamina.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein said alkali metal hydroxide is sodium hydroxide.
6. The method of Claim 5, wherein said sodium hydroxide is from about 4% to 8 (w/w).
7. The method of Claim 5, wherein said alkali metal hydroxide is potassium hydroxide.
8. The method of Claim 7, wherein said potassium hydroxide is from about 4% to 8 % (w/w).